

Message Text

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S E C R E T TEHRAN 9523

EXDIS

BEIRUT PLEASE PASS USINT BAGHDAD

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SUBJ: IRAN/IRAQ RELATIONS

REF: (A) TEHRAN 4088 NOTAL
(B) TEHRAN 4143 NOTAL
(C) TEHRAN 6438 NOTAL

1. AT AUDIENCE LATE AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 25 FOR DEFREP IRAN, MR. VON MARBOD, AND GENERAL VANDENBERG, SHAH COMMENTED THAT DURING RECENT ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN NEW YORK IRAQ HAD TAKEN POSITION THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO MILITARY ASSISTANCE OF ONE PERSIAN GULF STATE TO ANOTHER AND THAT THE ONLY MATTER THAT THE LITTORAL STATES SHOULD GUARANTEE WAS FREE PASSAGE FOR SHIPPING IN THE PERSIAN GULF.

WHAT I POINTED OUT THAT THIS REPRESENTED A CONSIDERABLE HARDENING OF THE IRAQI ATTITUDE, THE SHAH REPLIED THAT THIS WAS INDEED SO. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE IRAQI POSITION WOULD NOT EVEN PERMIT HIM TO DO WHAT HE IS DOING IN OMAN, I.E., SUPPORTING THAT GOVERNMENT WITH TROOPS AGAINST THE DHOFAR REBELS. THE SHAH IS PERSUADED THAT THE IRAQIS HAVE BUCKLED TO INTENSE SOVIET PRESSURE ON PERSIAN GULF RELATIONS,

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CONVICTION WHICH IS SUPPORTED BY CONTINUING SOVIET ARMS SHIP-

MENTS TO IRAQ. WHEREAS SHAH EARLY THIS SUMMER WAS THINKING OF REDUCING HIS FORCES IN THE WEST AND STRENGTHENING THEM IN THE EAST, HE IS NOW AGAIN CONCERNED ABOUT IRAQ'S ATTITUDE TOWARD IRAN. THIS HAS BEEN ABETTED BY A REPORT PASSED TO HIM BY THE GOVERNMENT OF KUWAIT THAT IRAQI VICE PRESIDENT SADDAM HUSSEIN HAD RECENTLY STATED TO A KUWAITI OFFICIAL THAT THE IRAN"IRAQ AGREEMENT OF LAST SPRING WAS ENTERED INTO BY THE IRAQIS BECAUSE THEY HAD AN ACUTE PROBLEM WITH THE KURDS IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THEIR COUNTRY. SADDAM HUSSEIN IS ALLEGED TO HAVE THEN POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ CAN ABROGATE THE AGREEMENT ANY TIME IT WANTS.

2. STAYING BEHIND AFTER VON MARBOD AND VANDENBERG HAD DEPARTED, ASKED THE SHAH ABOUT KUWAIT'S RELATIONS WITH IRAQ. HE REPLIED THAT THE KUWAITIS WERE DEEPLY WORRIED ABOUT IRAQ'S PRESSURE ON THEM AND THAT THEY WERE, AS A RESULT, PUSHING MUCH CLOSER TO IRAN FOR PROTECTION. THE SHAH COMMENTED THAT THE KUWAITI AMBASSADOR IN TEHRAN, WHO IS VICE DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE IN IRAN AS AN INDICATION THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF KUWAIT WANTS TO IMPROVE EVEN FURTHER ITS RELATIONS IN TEHRAN.
HELMS

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